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621 622 words, 'I die as I have lived—no cacique orders me,' aptly express the prevalent feeling on this subject. Nevertheless, all 'parties,' however small, are, when travelling, under the command of a cacique or 'gownok,' who is sometimes also designated by the more endearing epithet of 'yank,' or father; but his influence is very frequently confined to ordering the march and chase. Some of the chiefs are hereditary, but it is not invariably the rule; and amongst the northern Indians there are many petty chiefs, who are men that, having become possessed of a few mares and horses, assume the title of cacique. Great etiquette is observed between them; one chief being prohibited by custom [576] from entering the toldo of another unless presents have previously been interchanged. Another curious point of etiquette is that a man is not allowed to look towards his [606] father-in-law when in conversation with him; this is, however, not confined to the aristocracy, but also applies to the common herd. When two parties of Indians are approaching 202 576 one another, and sufficiently near to distinguish the smoke of the hunting-fires, a signal-fire is lighted, and a chasqui—called by the Tehuelches coêto—generally some relative of the chiefs, is despatched from either side. On meeting they repair to the camp of the most powerful, and, on arriving near, more horsemen sally out and escort them to the toldo of the chief. On arrival the new comer dismounts, his horses and gear are taken charge of, and he is shown, with great formality, to a seat, were he patiently remains, sometimes for an hour, answering, with grave face, all questions; and then delivers any message he may be entrusted with. Although he may be wearied, tired, and hungry, he never moves until the formalities are concluded; he is then provided with the best food and accommodation his host is possessed of.

181 It is to be hoped that the narrated actual life in the toldos will have enabled the reader to form an idea of the character of the Tehuelches more favourable than that which—except by the missionaries, Messrs. Hunziker and

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Schmid—has usually been assigned to them. They certainly 181
do not deserve the epithets of ferocious savages, brigands of the desert, &c. They are kindly, good-tempered, impulsive children of nature, taking great likes or dislikes, becoming firm friends or equally confirmed enemies. They are very naturally suspicious of strangers, but especially those of 648
Spanish origin, or, as they term them, Cristianos. Nor, considering the treatment—treacherous cruelty and knavish rob-bery—experienced by them at the hands of the invaders and colonists alternately, is this to be wondered at.

In the southern part of the country, their frequent intercourse with sealers on the coast has rendered them favourably disposed towards Englishmen. This remark, of course, does not extend to the northern Tehuelches, who have not the same opportunities.

In my dealings with them I always treated with fair- 577
ness and consideration, and my few belongings—although borrowed at times, according to their mutual way of acting towards one another—were taken the greatest care of; thus an Indian would frequently ask to look at my arms, and, after examining them, would carefully return them to me. During my whole stay amongst them I only lost two articles: the first, a flint and steel, was, I have reason to believe, stolen by one of the Chilians; the second was a pair of ostrich balls, which were abstracted from the toldo. The Indians, although honest enough as regards each other, will, nevertheless, not scruple to steal from any one not belonging to their party. Thus, when they enter the colonies for trade, they will pick up a stray horse in the most natural manner; and in Santa Cruz, Graviel and others constantly pilfered iron nails and small articles. With regard to their truthfulness, my experience was as follows. In minor affairs they nearly always 577
lie, and will invent stories for sheer amusement; thus, 522
Mrs. Orkeke came to me whilst in Teckel with the news that Casimiro's wife was dead. My remark was, 'And a good riddance too!' which was received with a burst of laughter,

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The obsidian and flint articles were confined to scrapers used by the women for cleansing skins, and flints for obtaining fire. There were no traditions regarding the migrations of tribes extant amongst the Indians. It was impossible to obtain information of their forefathers from the Indians. The disposition of the Tehuelches was, when not excited by drink or warfare, cheerful and good-humoured. They treated Lieut. Musters with great kindness. They were particularly fond of their children. During the author's visit and travels in the country, all the tribes were mustered for political purposes: being on the staff of the head chief, he took notes of the numbers of each tribe: from these data he made his calculations, allowing four women and children to each able-bodied man. The numbers are probably slightly under than over the mark.

The following gentlemen also took part in the discussion on the above: viz., Mr. J. J. Monteiro, Col. Lane Fox, Mr. Charlesworth, Mr. Wade, Dr. Richard King, Mr. Wake, Mr. H. Howorth, Mr. Lewis, and the Chairman.

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earnest business that calls their faculties into full exercise, their features light up with unexpected intelligence and animation. In fact, as one becomes familiar with them, he will not fail to detect an habitual expression of "secretiveness" and duplicity, which he will wonder he did not observe sooner. They are almost as imitative as monkeys, and are all great liars; falsehood is universal and inveterate with men, women and children. The youngest seem to inherit the taint, and vie with the oldest in displaying it. The detection of a falsehood gives them no shame or uneasiness. To these traits should be added a thorough-paced treachery, and, what might seem rather inconsistent with their other qualities, a large share of vanity, and an immoderate love of praise. They are excessively filthy in their personal habits. Hydrophobia, so to speak, is a prevailing distemper; they never wash themselves. Hands and faces are covered with dirt, so thick, and of such ancient deposit, that their natural color only appears in spots, laid bare by the mechanical loosening and displacement of some of the strata, which curiously variegates the surface. It is hardly necessary to remark that such a condition of the skin is highly favorable to the increase and multiplication of "the moving creature that hath life," wherewith their persons are abundantly peopled.

The women are proportionally smaller than the men, and rather inclined to embonpoint. The old chief had four wives, though he had probably never heard of Mahomet or his domestic laws. The rest of the tribe had only one wife apiece. The women erect the wigwams, provide fuel and cook, — if the operation should be dignified with that name, — in short, all the drudgery falls to their lot They are

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treated as slaves, but made, in most respects, as comfortable in their servitude as the condition of their rude masters will admit. When, however, their lords are excited by gambling, or enraged for any or no cause, the fury of passion is visited upon their defenceless heads, which they bear uncomplainingly, with a meek submissiveness worthy of better treatment. They are passionately fond of trinkets and clumsy ornaments, such as bits of brass and copper, beads, and the like, which they wear suspended from their necks. A few of them had their ears pierced, and wore brass or copper ear-rings; and many of them decked out their children with similar rude finery which is valued more than anything else, except rum, tobacco and bread. The men paint or bedaub their faces and breasts with a kind of red earth. Charcoal is also used as a cosmetic. A broad line of red alternating with a stripe of black, in various fantastic figures, is a favorite style of decoration. The women make themselves, if possible, still more hideous, by the application of a pigment made of clay, blood and grease. Some of them would be very comely, if only cleanly, and content to leave nature less strenuously adorned.

The people are as deficient in the morals as in the refinements and courtesies of domestic life; their licentiousness is equal to their cruelty, — the filth of their persons only too faithfully represents the degree in which "their mind and conscience is defiled." I saw no person, of either sex, that appeared to have attained advanced age, though it was difficult to judge of this. The oldest Indian I remember to have seen did not seem to be above sixty.

Their only wealth, aside from their huts, consists of

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Though their great size at first sight was fitted to inspire terror, it required no very long observation to discover that they were deficient in natural courage. This, in fact, might be inferred at once, from their habitual deceit, treachery and artifice, which are the defences of the weak and timorous, rather than the weapons of strong and daring natures. They always select the night to inflict injuries; never meet an enemy in open combat whom they can stab from behind, or despatch in the dark; and, when obliged to attack by day, always do so in large numbers. This defect of courage is increased by their superstition; they have great faith in charms, signs and omens, a weakness which I anticipated might exert great influence on my destiny in important conjunctures. Could I by any means so master their secret as to possess myself of its mystic power, it might prove an effective aid to my plans of self-defence, or of escape. Should it, on the other hand, be turned by any accidental causes against me, its impulse might prove irresistible by power or contrivance. There was no appearance of idolatrous worship among them, nor could I observe any allusion to a Supreme Being, or to any superior powers having personal attributes; and, except a single ceremony, of which more hereafter, the nature of which was and is still inexplicable, there was nothing that suggested to my mind the idea of religious worship. Whether they are cannibals or not, has been a matter of some dispute. So far as I know, they have been, heretofore, only casually observed on the beach by voyagers, or vaguely reported of by the people of adjoining countries and neighboring settlements; neither of which is a sufficiently reliable source of information. My own personal advantages on this head